

Today's News - Monday, November 25, 2013

- ArcSpace brings us Asymptote's ARC River Culture Pavilion in South Korea; a profile of Perrault; NYC's NoMad Hotel; and Baeza's government offices in Spain.
- O'Sullivan explains why his hometown of London often makes him "wince" for wanting to "import ill-fitting, faded concepts" from NYC, including "two flashy new towers that pretend very hard that they've escaped from somewhere in the 212 area code" (they're a "barbed compliment" to Manhattan, being "crass community displacement projects").
- Fraade is frustrated with Economist-style city "livability" ratings that have become a cottage industry that too often "prize stability over vigor and opportunity."
- Speck appears on a political talk show to explain "why smart growth and sustainable design can be achieved by making our cities more walkable" - the goal crosses political lines (what a concept!).
- Hough finds much to ponder in the student winners of ASLA's design competition: they are "obsessed with cities and all things green," but "traditional, design-based landscape architecture has gone AWOL."
- Iovine, Goldhagen, and Rosenbaum come away with mixed feelings about the Kimbell's Piano Pavilion: "The Kahn sits in sublime wordless serenity while the Piano natters away"; "quite frankly, it looks as though Piano designed it with a straightjacket on"; the concrete walls "subvert Old Master paintings' subtleties" (but sculptures look great) + the oh-so-green side of the pavilion.
- Calys explains why nothing is simple when it comes to choosing a proposal for San Francisco's Crissy Field in the Presidio: "at least the work of two fine architects is still in the running" (with hopes that Lucas takes his confection to Chicago, as he threatens to do).
- Heathcote x 2: Chipperfield's Jumex Museum in Mexico City "may be an expression of serious wealth, but it is also an expression of serious intent, an urbane, open, civic space for art."
- He has a most interesting take on how buildings are used in sci-fi films: "Our inability to imagine the aesthetic of the future is partly a result of our saturation with images of the future from the past."
- Medina mulls OMA's De Rotterdam: it's "best seen from a distance. Up close, the details are, in a word, cheap, and have all the lyricism of a listless office tower in any mid-sized American city - it speaks to the continuing power of the Koolhaas brand, as well as finance capital's willingness to literally build anything" (lots of pix!).
- Bwalya cheers that there is finally the political will to require Zambians get a share in major construction projects: though it is "long overdue and very welcome, the ratio allocated is scandalously low."
- Hanley gives (mostly) thumbs-up to the 2013 Lisbon Architecture Triennale: it is "a youthful, messy, and ad-hoc presentation - with high highs, and a few low lows - that, despite its unevenness, pulses with a scrappy energy" that "reverberate with possibility."
- LANDinc and West 8 tapped to design a new urban park and waterfront trail at Ontario Place that has been closed to the public for more than 40 years.
- The two winning projects for Montreal's Luminothérapie promise to be luminous.

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-- Asymptote Architecture: ARC River Culture Pavilion, Daegu, South Korea
-- Dominique Perrault: his place-making effort sprouts from sets of actions that indicate links between conceptual thinking and material manipulation...
-- Hotels: The NoMad, New York City -- Schickel & Ditmars (1903); Jacques Garcia; Stonehill & Taylor
-- Alberto Campo Baeza: Offices for the Castilla León Government in Zamora, Castilla y León, Spain

Hey, London: Stop Trying to Be New York: ...why do its businesses and marketers feel the need to import ill-fitting, faded concepts...Developers are probably the worst for this...two flashy new towers coming that pretend very hard that they've escaped from somewhere in the 212 area code...Manhattan is actually being paid a barbed compliment by these towers' New York aspirations. Both of them are crass community displacement projects... By Feargus O'Sullivan- The Atlantic Cities

The 'Livability' Trap: ...conceptions are at once too narrow, because they exclude other valid ways of living in and interacting with cities, and too broad, because they rely on so many personal preferences that they end up being meaningless...Washington, D.C.'s high ranking...a case study in how the qualities that make someplace livable for one group of people are its undoing for others...A similar situation exists in Melbourne, a perennial "livability" favorite... By Jordan Fraade- The Atlantic Cities

The secret to saving cities of the future: City planner Jeff Speck joins The Cycle to explain why smart growth and sustainable design can be achieved by making our cities more walkable. [video]- MSNBC

Green Urbanism is the Future! Well, maybe: Students of landscape architecture are obsessed with cities and all things green - at least according to recent design awards. But are they forgetting about design? The big takeaways for me from the student awards are: Idealism is alive and well...Water rules...Traditional, design-based landscape architecture has gone AWOL. By Mark Hough -- American Society of Landscape Architects/ASLA; Mia Lehrer + Associates; Rebuild by Design [images, links]- PLANetizen

Piano's New Coda to Kahn's Masterwork: The architect's answer to: How do you add to perfection? ...Renzo Piano has topped his own track record for sensitive responses to someone else's work of genius. He should stop now and concentrate exclusively on his own architecture...Both are complex poems to proportion...The Kahn sits in sublime wordless serenity...while the Piano natters away. By Julie V. Iovine Louis I. Kahn (1972); Kendall/Heaton Associates - Wall Street Journal

Kimbell Art Museum Addition: With his expansion, Renzo Piano speaks softly to Louis Kahn's masterpiece: Everything about the project drips "R-E-S-P-E-C-T"—quite frankly, it looks as though Piano designed it with a straightjacket

on...That RPBW successfully solved the museum's space crunch without ruining, or even particularly changing, the original building is an accomplishment worth applauding. By Sarah Williams Goldhagen -- Kendall/Heaton Associates [slide show]- Architectural Record

How the Kimbell's Piano Pavilion Interacts With the Art: Concrete interior walls subvert Old Master paintings' subtleties: Architectural concrete...an unusually smooth, light gray wall surface with a titanium-enhanced luster, its characteristic mottling, splotches and "telegraphing"...distract from a focus on the art. On the other hand, sculptural works with a dynamic physical presence make a stronger statement... By Lee Rosenbaum- Wall Street Journal

The Kimbell Art Museum's Stylish, Sustainable New Addition: ...aims to complement Louis Kahn's monumental modernist aesthetic...What Renzo Piano's pavilion adds to the conversation is a stress on contemporary sustainability practices.- New York Times

Nothing's simple at the Presidio: Crissy Field proposals back to drawing board; Why did the Presidio Trust attempt to thread the needle by neither selecting nor eliminating any of the three proposals? Is the suggestion that Lucas redesign his building a diplomatic way of saying "see you on Lake Michigan?" ...at least the work of two fine architects is still in the running. By George Calys -- George Lucas; WRNS; EHDD [links to images]- San Francisco Examiner

Mexico City's Jumex Museum: ...a wonderful space for the largest private collection of contemporary art in Latin America...it may be an expression of serious wealth, but it is also an expression of serious intent, an urbane, open, civic space for art. By Edwin Heathcote -- David Chipperfield- Financial Times (UK)

How buildings are used in sci-fi films: Many film-makers return to familiar landscapes, believing that the destruction of places we know is more disturbing...Our inability to imagine the aesthetic of the future is partly a result of our saturation with images of the future from the past... By Edwin Heathcote -- László Moholy-Nagy; John Deaton; Frank Lloyd Wright [images]- Financial Times (UK)

De(lirious) Rotterdam: OMA Completes Holland's Largest Building: ...the project is best seen from a distance...Up close, the details are, in a word, cheap, and have all the lyricism of a listless office tower in any mid-sized American city...dazzling banality...If the De Rotterdam is a "vertical city," it's not a particularly exciting one...speaks to the continuing power of the Rem Koolhaas brand, as well as finance capital's willingness to literally build anything. By Samuel Medina [images]- Metropolis Magazine

Zambians getting raw deal from construction industry: ...a Statutory Instrument is about to come into force to direct that 20% of all major construction works should go to...Zambians after 49 years of political independence. The political will and the principle approach...is long overdue and very welcome in the construction industry but the ratio allocated to Zambians is scandalously low... By Dixon Bwalya/Zambia Institute of Architects - Times of Zambia

Close Encounters at the 2013 Lisbon Architecture Triennale: ..."Close, Closer"...is more social than spatial...feels like a work in progress. But that's the idea...a youthful, messy, and ad-hoc presentation—with high highs, and a few low lows—that, despite its unevenness, pulses with a scrappy energy...in a place heavy with the malaise of high unemployment and economic agita, these conversations reverberate with possibility. By William Hanley -- Beatrice Galilee [slide show]- Architectural Record

Design team announced for new urban park and waterfront trail at Ontario Place: ...will give residents and visitors access to part of the waterfront that has been closed to the public for more than 40 years. -- LANDinc; West 8- Canadian Architect

Winners and finalists of Montreal's Luminothérapie competition announced: ...two works will enhance the Quartier des Spectacles experience for visitors and Montrealers from December 11, 2013 to February 2, 2014. -- Kanva Architecture/Udo Design/Côté Jardin/Boris Dempsey/Pierre Fournier; Champagne Club Sandwich collective [link to images, info]- Canadian Architect

It is always Friday afternoon in Dealey Plaza: An urban setting seared into the national consciousness. By Michael J. Crosbie- ArchNewsNow

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